



she still murmured. The ears of the suspicious husband were placed close to her lips, that none of the whispering sounds might escape him. He, which its rested. A slight cry broke from the extremity of which his diseased imagination saw the worst shapes of hate and jealousy. With the pressing thought in her memory of the tasks before her she spoke of the little basket—the bread—*the bottle of milk, the slender slices of ham or venison*—which she had been accustomed to receive and bring. Then came the two words, ‘Giant’s Coffin,’ and the quick fancy of the outlaw, stimulated by hate and other passions, immediately reached, at a bound, the whole narrative of her dependence upon Holt and her meetings with him at the ‘Giant’s Coffin’!

A dark smile passed over his countenance. It was the smile of a demon, who is at length, after long being baffled, in possession of his prey.—Leda slept on—soundly slept—for nature had at length soothed the debtor, and compelled her rights—and the hour was approaching when it was usual for her to set out on her nightly progress. The resolution came quick as lightning, to the mind of the ruffian. He rose straightly from the rushes—drew his pistols from his belt—silently examined the flints, and, looking at the knife in his bosom, stole forth from the cavern. With a spirit exulting with the democratic hope of assuring himself on a secret long suspected, and of realizing a vengeance long delayed—and, a million, night and day, with every step in his progress, he hurried directly across the country to the banks of Reedy River. The night, by this time, had become tempestuous. Big drops of rain already began to fall; but these caused no delay to the hardy outlaw. He reached the river and moving now with cautious steps from rock to rock, he approached the ‘Giant’s Coffin’ with the manner of one who expects to find a victim, and an enemy. One hand grasped a pistol, the other a knife!—and, stealing onward with the pace of the Indian, he hung over the sides of the ‘Coffin,’ and peered into its dark chamber with his keenest eyes. It was untenant. ‘I am too soon,’ he muttered. ‘Well! I can wait!’ And where better to await the victim—where more secure from detection than in the vault which lay before him!—one half covered from the weather, and shut in from all inspection—that alone excepted, for which he had come prepared. The keen gusts of wind which now came across the stream laden with rain, was an additional motive to this movement. He obeyed the suggestion, passed into the mouth of the ‘Coffin,’ and crouching from sight, in a sitting posture, in the upper or covered part of the chamber, he sat with the anxiety of a passion which did not, however, impair his patience, awaiting for his foe.

He had not reached this position unseen or unaccompanied. We have already intimated that Acker, the epileptic, had made some progress in his discoveries. With the singular cunning, and the wonderful acuteness which distinguish some of the faculties, where others are impaired in the same individual, he had contrived, unseen and unsuspected, to track Leda Houston to the place of her husband’s concealment. He had discovered the periods of her incoming and departure, and, taking his rest at all other periods, he was always prepared to renew his surveillance at those moments when the wife was to go forth. He had barely resumed his watch, on the night in question, when he was surprised to see Houston himself, and not his wife, emerging from the cave. He followed cautiously his footsteps. Light of foot, and keeping at convenient distance, his espionage was farther assisted by the wind, which, coming in their faces, effectually kept all sounds of pursuit from the ears of the outlaw. His progress was not so easy when the latter emerged from the woods, and stood upon the banks of the river. His approach now required more caution; but, stealing on from shrub to shrub, and rock to rock Acker at length stood—or rather crouched—upon the brink of the river also, and at a small distance from the other. But of this distance he ceased to be conscious. He was better informed, however, when a moment after, he heard a dull, clattering, but low sound, which, he rightly conjectured to have been caused by some pressure upon the lower lid of the Coffin, which, being somewhat pendulous, was apt to vibrate slightly, in spite of its great length and weight, under any pressure from above. This sound apprised Acker of the exact whereabouts of the outlaw, and his keen eyes at length detected the dim outline of the latter’s form, as he stood upon the lid of the Coffin, the surprise of the young farmer, the epileptic was equally firm in refusing to go with him in the wagon. ‘I don’t mind the rain,’ said he, ‘it can’t hurt me.’ ‘He will get his death,’ said Leda. ‘Not he,’ replied Arthur, as Acker scampers through the woods; the water always helps him in his fits.’ While the wagon took one course, he took another. Little did they suspect his route. A terrible feeling carried him back to Reedy River—to a perilous tumbling of the water as it paused its way among the rocks, and by the increasing disorders of the wind and rain, which now came down in heavy showers. As he crawled from rock to rock, with the stealthy movement of a cat along some precipitous ledge, shrilling and silvery beneath the storm, his own desire for shelter led him suddenly to the natural conclusion that Houston had found his within the vault. The idea of Acker came to him slowly; but gradually as he continued to approach, he remembered the clattering of the Coffin—led—he remembered how in his more youthful days, the boys, with great strength, had forced it to its present place, and he conceived the sudden purpose of making the Coffin of the Giant, that also of the deadly enemy, whose boyish persecutions he had neither forgot nor forgiven. To effect his present project, which, suddenly conceived, became far the more absorbing than a positive frenzy in his breast—he concentrated all his faculties, whether of mind or of body, upon his task. His pace was deliberate, and so steadily, that he reached the upper end of the Coffin, laid himself down beside it, and, applying his ear to one of the crevices, distinctly heard the suppressed breathings of the man within. Crawling back, he laid his hands lightly and with the greatest care upon the upper and heavier end of the stone. His simple touch so nicely did it seem to be balanced, caused its vibration; and with the first consciousness of its movement, Houston, whom we must suppose to have been lying down, raising his pistol with one hand, laid the other on one of the sides of the vault, with the view, as it was thought, to lift himself from his recumbent position. He did so just as the large plate was set in motion;

and the member was caught and closely wedged between the mass and the side of the Coffin upon which its rested. A slight cry broke from the outlaw. The fingers were crushed, the hand was effectually secured. But for this, so slow was the progress of the stone, that it would have been very easy for Houston to have scrambled out before the vault was entirely closed in—*the bottle of milk, the slender slices of ham or venison*—which she had been accustomed to receive and bring. Then came the two words, ‘Giant’s Coffin,’ and the quick fancy of the outlaw, stimulated by hate and other passions, immediately reached, at a bound, the whole narrative of her dependence upon Holt and her meetings with him at the ‘Giant’s Coffin’!

The hand was already lost to him. He resolved that it should not render the other useless. With a firmness that might well excite admiration, he drew the *couteau de chasse* from his bosom, and deliberately snote off the mutilated fingers at the joints; dividing the crushed parts—bone and tendon—from the uninjured—falling heavily back upon the stone floor the moment the hand was freed. But this time he had not fainted, though the operation tended to restore the hand, which had been denuded by the pressure and pain of its position, to something like sensibility. But such pain was now but slightly felt; and, wrapping the hand up in his handkerchief, he prepared with due courage for the difficult task before him. But the very first effort almost convinced him of its hopelessness. In vain did he press the strength of his muscular arm, the force of his broad shoulders, his sinewy and well-supported frame. Forced to crouch in his narrow limits, was not possible for him to apply to advantage, the strength which he really possessed; and, from the extreme shallowness of his cell in the lower extremity, he was unable to address his efforts to that part where the stone was thinnest. At the upper part, where he could labor, the mass was greatly thicker than the rest; and it was the weight of this mass, rather than the strength of Acker—the momentum once given it from above—that carried the plate along to the foot of the plane. His exertions were increased as his strength diminished—the cold sweat poured from his brow—and, toiling against conviction, in the face of his increasing terrors, he at length sank back in exhaustion. From time to time, at brief intervals, he renewed his toils, each time with new hope, each time with a new scheme for more successful exertion. But the result was, on each occasion, the same: and yielding to despair, he threw himself upon the bottom of his cell and called death to his relief.

While thus prostrate, with his face pressed upon the chilling pavement, he suddenly started, almost to his feet, and a new terror seizes upon his soul. He is made conscious of a new and pressing danger. Is it the billows of the river—the torrents swollen above their bounds—that beat against the walls of his dungeon? Is it the advancing waters that catch his eye glimmering faint at his feet, as they penetrate the lower crevices of the coffin? A terrible shudder shook his frame! He cannot doubt this new danger, and he who, a moment before, called upon death to relieve him from his terrors, now shouts under worse terrors, at the prospect of his near approach in an unexpected shape. It is necessary that he should employ all his strength—that he should make other and more desperate efforts.—He rises almost erect. He applies both arms—the maimed as well as the sound—almost unconscious of the difference to the lid of his tomb—‘Buried alive!’ he cries aloud—‘Buried alive! and at each cry his sinewy arms shoot up—his broad shoulders are raised: his utmost powers concentrated upon the one point, in the last effort of despair, must surely be successful. His voice shouts with his straining sinews. He feels the mass above him yielding. Once more—and once again—and still he is encouraged. The lid vibrates—he could not be deceived—but oh! how slightly. Another trial—he moves it as before, but as his strength fails, his efforts relax—and it sinks down in its place. Breathless he crouches in his cell. He listens! Is it a footstep? It is a movement! The stones fall about the roof of his narrow dwelling. A human agency is above. ‘Hurrah!’ he cries—‘Hurrah! ‘Thow off the stone—crush it—break it! There is no time to be lost!’ For a moment he fancies that the movement above is one intended for his relief. But what mean these rolling stones? A new apprehension possesses him in the very moment of his greatest hope. He rises. Once more he extends his arms, he applies his shoulders; but he labors now in vain. His strength is not less—his efforts are not more feeble—in this than in his former endeavors.—He cannot doubt the terrible truth! New stones have been piled above his head. He is doomed! His utmost powers fail to move the mass from its place. His human enemy is unrelenting.—He cries to him in a voice of equal inquiry and anguish.

‘Who is there? what enemy? who? who? Speak to me! who is above me? Who? who?’ Can it be? He is answered by a chuckle—a full, fiendish laugh—the most terrible sort of answer. Can it be that a mortal would so laugh at such a moment? He tries to recall those to whom he has given most occasion for vindictiveness and hate. He names ‘Arthur Holt’! He is again answered by a chuckle, and now he knows his enemy.

‘God of heaven!’ he exclaims in the bitter anguish of his discovery, ‘and can it be that I am doomed to perish by this most miserable of all my foes?’

Once more he rushes against the mass above him, but this time with his head alone. He sinks down stunned upon the floor, and is aroused by the water around him. Inch by inch it rises. He knows the character of the stream. It will be above him, unless he is relieved, in less than an hour. The proud and reckless outlaw is humbled. He condescends to entreat the wretched creature to whom he owes his situation. He implores forgiveness—he promises reward. He begs—he threatens—he execrates. He is answered by a chuckle as before; the epileptic sits upon his coffin-lid, and the doomed man can hear his heels without, as they beat time with the wind and waters, against the sides of his tomb. Meanwhile the water presses in upon him—he feels its advance around him—it is now about his knees—in another moment it is over

barely touch the floor of the chamber. His left hand is utterly useless. In this position he could not even exert the strength which he possessed; and, after an ineffectual effort, he sank back again in mental consternation. The horror of that moment passed in thought—the despair which it occasioned—was the parent of new strength. He came to a terrible decision. He became fully aware, that in order to avail himself of his right hand, it was necessary that he should extricate the other. He had already tried to do so, by a vain effort at lifting the massive lid of his coffin. The heavy plate no longer vibrated upon a pivot. It had sunk into a natural position, which each upright evenly maintained.—The hand was already lost to him. He resolved to pray to be forgiven, who has never been taught to forgive. He tries to pray! The epileptic without, as he stoops his ear, can catch the fragmentary plea, the spasmodic adjuration, the gasping, convulsive utterance, from a throat around which the waters are already writhing with close and unrelaxing grasp. Suddenly the voice ceases—there is a hoarse murmur—the struggle of the strong man among the waters, which press through the crevices between the lid and the sides of the dungeon. As the convulsion ceases, the epileptic starts to his feet, with a terror which he had not felt before; and, looking wildly behind him as he ran, bounded upon the sides of the neighboring hills.

Thus ends the legend of the ‘Giant’s Coffin.’ Tradition does not tell us of the farther fortunes of Leda Houston. Some pages of the chronicle have dropped. It is certain, however, that Arthur Holt, like Benedict, lived to be a married man, and died the father of several children—the descendants of some of whom still live in the same region. Of the ‘Coffin’ itself, some fragments, and it is thought, one of the sides, may be shown, but it was ‘blown up’ by the very freshet which we have described, and the body of Houston drifted down to the opposite shore. It was not till long after that Acker confessed the share which he had in the manner of his death and burial.

## OXFORD DEMOCRAT.

PARIS, SEPTEMBER 22, 1816.

### THE ELECTION.

We publish below the returns of the votes for Gov. from 34 towns in this County, and a Recapitulation of the vote, so far as lead from, in other Counties, making in all 265 towns. They give Mr. Dana a plurality over Mr. Bronson of 3133 votes; but by adding the Abolition and Scattering vote to that of Mr. Bronson, it will be seen that Mr. Dana wants 4920 votes of a majority. The towns to be heard from will increase the Democratic vote very much, but we think not enough to give Mr. Dana a majority.

The Congressional District will stand as follows: In the first, Hammons, Dem., is elected. In the second, there is no choice.

In the third, the strong Whig District embracing Kennebec, Belcher, Whig, is elected.

In the fourth, Lincoln and Oxford, no choice.

In the fifth and sixth, there is no choice.

In the seventh, Williams, Dem., the present Representative, is re-elected.

The Democrats have thus carried two Districts, and the Whigs one—no choice in four.

To the Senate, we have elected three in this County, three in Waldo, two, probably, in Cumberland, and one in the 8th District. The Whigs have elected three in Kennebec, and one Abolition-Whig in York. Lincoln and Somerset are uncertain. In York there is no choice of the remaining ticket, and in Penobscot no choice. The eastern Districts have not been heard from.

To the House, we have heard of the election of but 47 members—19 Democrats and 28 Whigs. From the Eastern section of the State we shall increase our number materially. There are, however, an unusual number of cases where no choice was effected.

The election throughout on the greatest cases of scatteration that ever occurred in this State, The Whigs and Abolitionists have pulled together wherever it was for their interest. The Democrats appear to have had their ranks invaded by a material entirely foreign and antagonistic to their principles, to which cause may be attributed, in a great measure, the present attitude of the State before the Union. We hope and trust that in the Representative Districts where no choice has been effected, all sectional feeling, all personal details, and all grievances will be washed and reconciled before the next trial,—that the issue will be that of Principle, not of Men. Will the Democrats of these Districts in this County where no choice has been effected, look to this? It is of the utmost importance! One vote, in the House, may secure the election of John W. Dana for Governor!

1815. 1846.  
Ante. More. Also. Dana. Bron. Pezen.  
sq. sq. sq. sq. sq. sq. sq. sq.

Albany,			111	17	19		
Andover,	70	31	60	54	8		
Andover N. Sur.	7	1	8	2			
Byron,	31	9	27	8	2		
Buchfield,	210	41	12	101	51	21	
Brownfield,	125	21	11	173	36		
Dixfield,	151	52	168	66	2		
Demarle,	100	26	151	22	17		
Fryeburg,	114	59	11	176	60	15	
Fryeburg A. G.			8				
Greenwood,	100	27	15	66	24	32	
Gilead,	20	35	10	26	23	7	
Hector,	44	81	50	80			
Holmes,	13	2	15	2			
Hanlin’s Gore,			11				
Lovell,	91	57	102	50	30		
Mason,	12	3	22	2			
Milton Plantation,			17				
Norway,	113	163	11	121	30	39	
Newry,	51	1	67	1	6		
No. 3.	11	3	10	5			
Paris,	277	80	14	265	84	23	
Peru,	83	10	30	123	7	38	
Rumford,	110	90	149	96	2		
Roxbury,	37	8	28	5			
Riley,	3	6	4	8			
Sumner,	100	42	17	94	36	30	
Stow,	54	5	68	10	1		
Stoneham,	41	7	65	15	1		
Sweden,	47	29	11	53	30	29	
Turner,	238	163	17	248	184	48	
Woodstock,	100	5	33	98	3	23	
Waterford,	99	18	40	102	56	70	

2511 1073 238 289 1131 168

## RECAPITULATION.

Dana.	Bronson.	Abo.
2899	1131	468
3440	2845	760
5215	3809	1263
3191	2638	1233
3834	4275	719
2101	4229	1114
827	620	531
2079	1133	451
1458	1874	206
1563	1874	482
784	638	752
218	290	31
265 towns	27900	24750 8073

OF We invite the attention of our readers to an article in to-day’s paper from the Washington Union on the protective principle. It is a home-thrust; and affords an argument which we have never seen answered, and until it can be proved that one man’s interest is better than another’s, and has greater claims upon the government than the interest of another, we never expect to see it answered. The principle of protection, if carried out practically, would dissolve the Union, and array each State against another, by a protection of its particular interest.

*Suicide of Hon. Felix Grundy McConnell.*—Hon. F. G. McConnell, member of Congress from Alabama, committed suicide, at his rooms in Washington City, on the 10th inst., by stabbing himself with a large knife three times in the neck and five times in the stomach. The wounds were very deep, and it is thought he must have died instantly. He had for two days previous been laboring under the influence



